

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1202

By Herron

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Hugh Gordon Stoker on his legendary musical career.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those gifted citizens who through their inherent talents and extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as legendary musical performers; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy individual is Gleason native, Hugh Gordon Stoker, who has had an amazing musical career as a member of the legendary singing group, The Jordanares; and

WHEREAS, young Mr. Stoker was raised in a family of musicians and enjoyed performing at monthly singing conventions such as the Snead-Grove Picnic in McKenzie, where at the age of 12, his piano-playing talents attracted the attention of John Daniel of the Daniel Quartet who rightfully predicted that the young man would become a star; and

WHEREAS, winning accolades for his performances with the Clement trio during his school days, after graduation at 15, young Gordon joined the Daniel Quartet in Nashville playing on WSM radio garnering fans across Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, proudly serving his country during World War II as a member of the Army Air Corp as a teletype operator, Gordon Stoker spent the next few years after the war furthering his education studying psychology, music and voice; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stoker returned to Nashville and rejoined the Daniel Quartet; in 1950 he won an audition, replacing a piano player who had been drafted, and became the newest member of a group that had been formed just a year earlier in Springfield, Missouri and was now appearing on the Grand Ole Opry: The Jordanares; and

WHEREAS, Gordon Stoker's musical career shifted dramatically in 1952 when tenor Bill Matthew was unable to perform, forcing Mr. Stoker, at a moment's notice, to become the first



tenor for The Jordanares; for the next 47 years, from 1953 to 2000, the group would almost constantly include Gordon Stoker as first tenor, Neal Matthew as second tenor and Hoyt Hawkins as baritone, and, since 1958, Ray Walker as bass; and

WHEREAS, performing on the Grand Ole Opry and across the nation, The Jordanares traveled to Memphis in 1955 to sing with Eddie Arnold at Ellis Auditorium where they met a young man backstage, with long sideburns and a pink shirt, who was a fan of the group who told them that if he ever got a recording contract he wanted to sing with them; and

WHEREAS, that young man was the King, Elvis Presley; true to his word, he called the group in January 1956 when he joined RCA records, beginning a musical relationship that would last over two decades and a friendship for Gordon Stoker that would last even longer; and

WHEREAS, a musical combination known around the world, The Jordanares performed on an astounding 361 records with the King, in addition to 28 of 31 Elvis movies; Gordon Stoker sang duets with Elvis on hit records, "All Shook Up," "Good Luck Charm," and "Easy Come, Easy Go"; and

WHEREAS, true American musical legends, The Jordanares have had a truly amazing career spanning over 50 years of continuous demand for the singers' vocal talents which easily serves as a living testimony to their wonderful musical talents; and

WHEREAS, during their extraordinary career, Gordon Stoker and The Jordanares have performed with such legendary figures as Patsy Cline, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Ricky Nelson, Roy Orbison, Connie Francis and George Jones as well as such contemporary artists as Vince Gill, The Judds, Tanya Tucker and Steve Wariner; and

WHEREAS, recording stars in their own right, The Jordanares have earned numerous honors and awards during their career, including the 2002 Golden Voice Awards Vocal Group of the Year and the 2003 Grammy for Best Southern, Country, or Bluegrass Gospel Album; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stoker and The Jordanares are members of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, the North America Country Music Associations International Hall of Fame, the Rockabilly Hall of Fame and the Country Music Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Hugh Gordon Stoker is most thankful for the love and companionship he shares with his beloved wife, Jean, and is the proud father of three devoted children, Alan, Brent and Venita and grandfather to five treasured grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary musical career, Hugh Gordon Stoker has epitomized the spirit and dedication found in all true Tennesseans; his commitment to excellence to his profession serves as a model and inspiration to those who will follow him; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Hugh Gordon Stoker on his outstanding career and the tremendous musical talent he has shared with music fans across Tennessee and around the world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Mr. Hugh Gordon Stoker of The Jordanares for his artistry and excellence as a musician and his service to the people of Tennessee, extending to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.